

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This claim listing replaces all prior versions of the claims in this application:

1. (Previously Presented) A method for automated tracking of events associated with a billing cycle for use in connection with a computerized billing system, the method comprising the steps of:

retrieving, using a data tracking and notification system, a billing schedule for a billing cycle in the computerized billing system, the billing schedule comprising:

a plurality of milestones for billing processes to be completed during the billing cycle; and

a plurality of billing cycle events that occur for each of the milestones in the billing cycle, each of the billing cycle events comprising an expected value, a date/time value, an actual value, and a threshold value, wherein the expected value specifies a desired value for the billing cycle event, the date/time value specifies a date and time at which the billing cycle event is to achieve the expected value, the actual value indicates a status of the billing cycle event, and the threshold value is based on the expected value, the date/time value, and the actual value; identifying, using the data tracking and notification system, a first billing cycle event from the plurality of billing cycle events;

accessing, using the data tracking and notification system, a first rule set corresponding to the first billing cycle event, the first rule set defining prespecified

rules for computing the expected value for the first billing cycle event and for computing the actual value for the first billing cycle event from information generated by the computerized billing system;

executing, using the data tracking and notification system, the first rule set to compute the expected value and compute the actual value for the first billing cycle event;

comparing, using the data tracking and notification system, the expected value for the first billing cycle event to the actual value for the billing cycle event at the date/time value for the first billing cycle event to determine whether the threshold for the first billing cycle event has been met or exceeded; and

issuing, using the data tracking and notification system, a first notification if the actual value for the first billing cycle event meets or exceeds a first predetermined threshold.

2-4 (Canceled)

5. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

subsequent to issuing the first notification, determining, using the data tracking and notification system, an updated actual value for the first billing cycle event; and

issuing, using the data tracking and notification system, a second notification if the updated actual value exceeds a second threshold value.

6. (Canceled)

7. (Currently Amended) A data tracking and notification system for automated tracking of events associated with a billing cycle for use in connection with a computerized billing system, the data tracking and notification system comprising:

- a data tracking engine configured to:

- retrieve a billing schedule for a billing cycle in the computerized billing system, the billing schedule comprising:

- a plurality of milestones for billing processes to be completed during the billing cycle; and

- a plurality of billing cycle events that occur for each of the milestones in the billing cycle, each of the billing cycle events comprising an expected value, a date/time value, an actual value, and a threshold value, wherein the expected value specifies a desired value for the billing cycle event, the date/time value specifies a date and time at which the billing cycle event is to achieve the expected value, the actual value indicates a status of the billing cycle event, and the threshold value is based on the expected value, the date/time value, and the actual value; and

- a rule-based engine configured to:

- identify a first billing cycle event from the plurality of billing cycle events;

access a first rule set corresponding to the first billing cycle event, the first rule set defining prespecified rules for computing the expected value for the first billing cycle event and for computing the expected value for the first billing cycle event and for computing the actual value for the first billing cycle event from information generated by the computerized billing system;

execute the first rule set to compute the first expected value for the first billing cycle event and to compute the first actual value for the first billing cycle event from information generated by the computerized billing system;

compare the expected value for the first billing cycle event to the actual value for the billing cycle event at the date/time value for the first billing cycle event to determine whether the threshold for the first billing cycle event has been met or exceeded; and

issue~~ing~~ a first notification if the actual value for the first billing cycle event meets or exceeds a first predetermined threshold.

8-10 (Canceled)

11. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 7, wherein the rule-based engine is further configured to determine an updated actual value for the first billing cycle event subsequent to issuing the first notification, and issue a second notification if the updated actual value exceeds a second predetermined threshold.

12-18 (Canceled)

19. (Previously Presented) A computer program product for automated tracking of events associated with a billing cycle for use in connection with a computerized billing system, the computer program product including computer program code for performing the steps of:

retrieving a billing schedule for a billing cycle in the computerized billing system, the billing schedule comprising:

a plurality of milestones for billing processes to be completed during the billing cycle; and

a plurality of billing cycle events that occur for each of the milestones in the billing cycle, each of the billing cycle events comprising an expected value, a date/time value, an actual value, and a threshold value, wherein the expected value specifies a desired value for the billing cycle event, the date/time value specifies a date and time at which the billing cycle event is to achieve the expected value, the actual value indicates a status of the billing cycle event, and the threshold value is based on the expected value, the date/time value, and the actual value;

identifying, using the data tracking and notification system, a first billing cycle event from the plurality of billing cycle events;

accessing a first rule set corresponding to the first billing cycle event, the first rule set defining prespecified rules for computing the expected value for the first billing cycle event and for computing the actual value for the first billing cycle event from information generated by the computerized billing system;

executing the first rule set to compute the expected value and compute the actual value for the first billing cycle event;

comparing the expected value for the first billing cycle event to the actual value for the billing cycle event at the date/time value for the first billing cycle event to determine whether the threshold for the first billing cycle event has been met or exceeded; and

issuing a first notification if the actual value for the first billing cycle event meets or exceeds a first predetermined threshold.

20-22 (Canceled)

23. (Previously Presented) The computer program product of claim 19, further comprising computer program code for performing the steps of:

subsequent to issuing the first notification, determining an updated actual value for the first billing cycle event; and

issuing a second notification if the updated actual value exceeds a second predetermined threshold.

24. (Canceled)

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